

Many Americans, Israelis, and other allies have serious doubts as to whether Iran will actually comply with the terms of the JCPOA, and believe Iran cannot be trusted. I share these concerns. But the JCPOA is not based on trust but on verification through constant monitoring.

While intense inspections by the IAEA under the agreement are not sufficient to satisfy some critics, over 70 nuclear non-proliferation experts such as former Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar; Generals Brent Scowcroft and Colin Powell; 29 top U.S. scientists; 440 Rabbis; more than 60 former Israeli Security Officials; over 50 Christian leaders; and more than 100 former U.S. Ambassadors have endorsed the agreement publicly. The United Nations Security Council voted unanimously to support the JCPOA as well.

From a practical perspective, it makes little sense for the United States to walk away from the JCPOA given the broad diplomatic consensus and lack of reasonable alternatives to rolling back Iran's nuclear program. Our negotiating partners, who had reluctantly agreed to sanctions in the first place, have said in no uncertain terms that a better deal with Iran under current circumstances cannot be found. In fact, if the U.S. were to now reject the agreement, the broad international support currently in favor of sanctions would disappear, the guarantee of nuclear inspections would vanish, and our nation's diplomatic stature in the world would be greatly diminished.

To be sure, it is vital that the JCPOA be backed by a strong commitment to ensuring that Iran remains in full compliance or face overwhelming military force. Current intelligence confirms that Iran is within months of developing nuclear weapons capability. Under no circumstances should Iran ever be allowed to pursue a nuclear weapon. Yet, before military action is pursued, I firmly believe that our nation must, as it has through the JCPOA, exhaust all of its diplomatic options and give peace a chance.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ said: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Waging peace is hard and requires far more than trust and good intentions. It requires verification and transparency, which this agreement more than provides. For these reasons, I will support the JCPOA and oppose the passage of any legislation disapproving of the agreement transmitted to Congress by the President relating to the nuclear program of Iran.

#### IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NICHOLSON BRIDGE

### HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 11, 2015*

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to help commemorate the 100th anniversary of the completion of the Nicholson Bridge, also known as the Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct. Located in Nicholson, Pennsylvania, which I currently represent, the structure has continually served as a vital piece of infrastructure, providing my constituents with efficient transportation throughout Pennsylvania and New York.

Led by the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, construction of the Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct commenced in 1912. Its completion, dedication, and opening for use took place on November 6, 1915. This engineering marvel was an integral piece of a larger project known as the Clarks Summit-Hallstead Cutoff, engineered in order to shorten the rail line between Scranton, Pennsylvania and Binghamton, New York. The Clarks-Summit Hallstead Cutoff proved to be a huge success, exponentially reducing travel time and subsequently improving transportation efficiency. The bridge's role in this effort was particularly helpful to the residents of Nicholson, a rural town tucked away between Wyoming County and the Endless Mountains of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

In 1975, the America Society of Civil Engineers designated the Nicholson Bridge as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark due to the bridge's significant contribution to the development of the United States, and to the field of Civil Engineering. Furthermore, as of 1977, this structural feat was listed on the National Register of Historic Places—an honor attributable to its architectural, engineering, and transportation significance.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the Nicholson Bridge as it celebrates its 100th anniversary. I know that I speak on behalf of a proud community when I say that I am eternally grateful for this engineering wonder, and I look forward to the structure's preservation over the years to come.

#### RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION'S CONSTITUTION WEEK

### HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 11, 2015*

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an important occasion: Constitution Week. This week is set aside to allow Americans to reflect on their responsibilities under the Constitution and encourage us to study our founding document.

This significant designation was made official by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on August 2, 1956 at the urging of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). The patriotic celebrations that accompany this week are essential for maintaining reverence for this inspirational charter.

Since our country's inception, we have endured as a society committed to securing and protecting the basic rights of all citizens. While our founding document has been amended throughout our nation's lifetime, the basic rights ratified 228 years ago remain intact today. This body, at the most fundamental level, retains its foremost responsibility of protecting these rights. After all, we are all members of the "People's House." May we never forget where our authority derives.

We have remained a country committed to freedoms through many trials and triumphs over the years. Countless of our fellow citizens have sacrificed their lives in honor of that pledge. From the Continentals who first defended the freshly formed Union, to those who are currently serving in harm's way around the

globe; these men and women allow us to enjoy our sacred homeland in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a special mention about the work being done by the Ecor Rouge Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Baldwin County, Alabama, to bring attention to our nation's most important governing document during Constitution Week.

So on this Constitution Week, I encourage all Americans to set aside time to read our nation's Constitution and reflect on the many sacrifices made throughout history to protect this document and our freedoms.

#### HONORING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF BROWNSVILLE

### HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 11, 2015*

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important and meaningful work that the Community Development Corporation of Brownsville has carried out in the lower Rio Grande Valley over the past four decades.

Since 1974, the Community Development Corporation of Brownsville (CDCB), a 501(c)(3) community housing development organization, has been successfully working to utilize collaborative partnerships that create sustainable communities across the Rio Grande Valley. The partnerships have helped ensure quality education, model financing, efficient home design, and superior construction.

CDCB is the largest non-profit producer of single family housing in Texas. In 2014, CDCB built 125-plus homes, assisted 178 families, created 375 jobs, and added \$4.6 million to the local economy as well as \$2.5 million in additional tax revenue.

One of the CDCB's latest housing development projects, known as La Hacienda Casitas in Harlingen, Texas, was designed and constructed with the help of local contractors, non-profits, and businesses. This project adopted new construction designs that will work to mitigate flooding and erosion that all too often plague the area. La Hacienda Casitas is a model for housing programs across the nation.

For more than 10 years, CDCB's YouthBuild program has been opening doors for 16- to 24-year-olds in Brownsville, Texas, helping them develop life skills and prepare for future careers. By providing opportunities in construction, community service, education and leadership development, the YouthBuild program is preparing students to excel and adapt to diverse workforce opportunities in their communities.

The RAPIDO Project, a pioneering \$2 million project funded by federal and state post-Hurricane Dolly funds, is a new approach to traditional disaster recovery housing. This project will help those who have lost their homes move into new ones in a matter of weeks, rather than living in a Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) trailer for an unknown period of time. The RAPIDO Project brings together architects, urban planners, developers and project managers, from throughout the state, in an effort to help redefine disaster recovery housing that is affordable and efficient.

In 2015, the CDCB was awarded the Energy Star Certified Homes Market Leader Award for 80 homes they built last year. The organization received the Maxwell Award of Excellence and the Federal Home Loan Bank System Community Partnership Award. CDCB has also been recognized with the State of Texas Housing Finance Special Achievement Award, and in 2013 the organization was awarded the Highest Cumulative kW Savings Award by American Electric Power Texas.

In July 2013, CDCB became a member of the national Neighborworks Network, an organization focused on supporting housing organizations in bettering their communities.

During the past 40 years, the Community Development Corporation of Brownsville has helped many families in the Rio Grande Valley achieve the American dream of owning a home. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to recognize the Community Development Corporation of Brownsville, led by Nick Mitchell-Bennett, for outstanding, innovative, and important work in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

IN HONOR OF MS. DURELL  
DECKER AGHA

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 11, 2015*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Durell Decker Agha, a wonderful woman and dear friend who died yesterday at the all too young age of 73. Durell was a lifelong resident of the Monterey Peninsula and active in local community and business activities.

Born Jan. 31, 1942, Durell grew up, as I did, in Carmel, attending Sunset School and Carmel High School. I remember Durell's family, the Deckers, fondly. They were always involved in lots of community and neighborhood activities. They liked hosting class parties for Durell and her friends at their home in the country. Durell's father and mother owned a grocery store so food was always plentiful to snack on at their house. Durell's brother Paget was a popular community activist. One of the kindest acts by Durell's Dad was his offer to drive us both up to Salem, Oregon to begin our freshman year in college at Willamette University. The home town kids at Willamette—Durell, myself and another Peninsula kid, Hillary Teague—always checked in with each other. We were each other's family away from home.

After her first year at Willamette, Durell came back to the Monterey area for a short time, before heading off to Europe to travel and attend the University of Bordeaux in France. After a year and a half abroad, she returned to California and finished college at UCLA, earning a bachelor's degree in history, with a concentration in Middle East studies.

Following graduation, she worked at Fourtané Jewelers in Carmel, where she was introduced to Nader Agha, shortly after he immigrated to the Monterey area from Syria. The two married in 1965. While their marriage lasted 17 years, they maintained a lifelong partnership that included running various businesses and managing properties together.

Durell was very proud of her children and loved them dearly. She shared great love and

rapport with her grandchildren, sharing books of antiquity with Kaden and gardening with Jasmine. Her family will always remember her very giving and supportive ways, as she always put others before herself. Durell enjoyed reading, antiquing with friends and family, and jewelry. She had a deep love for the Carmel area and its history, which showed in her book and photography collections.

She is survived by many family members, including three children, Mahir Agha of Carmel Valley, Sumaya Agha of Carmel, and Laith Agha of Carmel; two grandchildren; sister-in-law Holly Decker; niece Kyle Holton; and close family members Nader Agha, Nadia Agha and Fadia Alhawach.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I speak for the whole House in sharing our deepest condolences to Durell's family and friends. She was a bright light in so many lives, including my own. We will all miss her terribly.

#### APPROVE THE JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

**HON. ANNA G. ESHOO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 11, 2015*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, today I voted for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. I did so because the world is approximately 90 days away from Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon, and this agreement is the most effective way of stopping that effort dead in its tracks.

After years of sanctions and then direct negotiations, the United States and its partners, the P5+1, have produced a plan with unprecedented concessions from Iran, together with the most rigorous inspections, restrictions and verifications regimen ever negotiated.

The agreement will reduce the number of Iran's centrifuges by two-thirds; prevent Iran from producing weapons-grade plutonium; and eliminate 98 percent of Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium. It grants the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) access to Iran's nuclear program so that compliance is ensured, including notification to the agency of plans to construct new nuclear facilities. No facility—declared or undeclared—will be off limits. Decades of essential monitoring measures are included in the agreement that allow the IAEA to enforce these terms.

The United States can unilaterally resume the U.N. Security Council sanctions if there is any violation by Iran of its commitments in the next ten years, and there can be no veto from Russia or China.

This agreement is without precedent, and so is the current instability in the Middle East, undoubtedly fueled by the actions of Iran. It has the support of the entire United Nations, including the European Union, Russia, and China.

Experts from all aspects of our defense, diplomatic, and scientific communities support the agreement, including 36 top officials in the U.S. military, 29 of our nation's leading scientists and engineers, 100 former ambassadors and diplomats, and more than 4,000 Catholic religious women.

The agreement has the support of more than 400 American Rabbis, as well as former top officials of the Israeli security forces,

Mossad Chief Efraim Halevy and former Shin Bet Director Ami Ayalon.

Our nation's most prominent nuclear scientists and engineers described their support for the agreement in a recent letter to President Obama, saying it is "technically sound," "stringent" and "innovative."

And in their open letter to Congress, Catholic Sisters from across our country called on us to "risk on the side of peace" by supporting the JCPOA.

No definitive alternative has been put forth by those who oppose the agreement. Furthermore, should the United States abandon the agreement, our country would be viewed as feckless, a nation whose word cannot be trusted and our international partners would no longer commit to sanctions.

For Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, this, in my view, is an existential moment. By eliminating the possibility of Iran developing a nuclear weapon, Israel's security is enhanced and so is the stabilization of the region by removing the threat of a nuclear Iran.

For all these reasons and more, I support this agreement and risk on the side of peace by voting for the JCPOA.

#### OPPOSITION TO IRAN DEAL

**HON. STEVE ISRAEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 11, 2015*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the Iran deal that was reached in July 2015 and make known my opposition to the resolution of approval before the House today.

I must say, however, that as a leading opponent of the Iran deal, I am deeply disturbed by the last minute decision of House Republican leadership to inject irresponsible partisan politics into the upcoming vote. House Republicans are, once again, playing political football with the safety and security of Israel, this time by straying from their original plan of an up or down vote on the deal and forcing an irresponsible three-bill gimmick on the House of Representatives.

With that being said, even though I was skeptical of the negotiations and interim agreement, I tried to get to a position where I could support the final deal. I took my time to understand every word of the final deal, I read the classified materials, spoke to the President, met with administration officials, security experts, and constituents. I listened carefully to every analysis and opinion on both sides of this issue.

This is one of the most profound foreign policy decisions I will have to make in Congress, second only to going to war with Iraq. And despite some positive elements in the deal, the totality has compelled me to oppose it. I came to this decision after an intense analysis of the details and merits of this deal and remain concerned about three major components.

First of all, I believe Iran is highly likely to exploit ambiguities in the agreement. They are unlikely to engage in massive violations, but will perform a series of "small-cheats", and they will not face punitive measures for it.

Secondly, the lifting of the arms embargo will create additional pathways for Iran to supply the ruthless terrorist organizations, Hamas